



MILITARY AND HOSPITALLER ORDER OF SAINT LAZARUS OF JERUSALEM
The Spiritual Protector His Beatitude Patriarch Gregorios III



**Sermon on the Occasion of the Pilgrimage
of the Order of Saint Lazarus to
Santiago de Compostela**

Pentecost 23 May 2010

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”
(Matthew 18: 20)

After his resurrection, the apostles were glad when they saw the Lord.

We are gathered around the risen Lord and his apostle, Saint James of Compostela in this pilgrimage.

Pilgrimage is one of the most striking aspects of Christian worship. Down the ages, pilgrimages have been a way of communion and communication, of spiritual sharing of faith, culture, art, commerce and humanity – and a factor for living together in peace.

Saint James of Compostela, the Lord’s brother, first bishop of Jerusalem, unites us today as members of the Saint Lazarus Order, and as pilgrims from many nations.

This pilgrimage to the apostle’s tomb also unites us to Jerusalem, mother of all Churches, and to the Church of the Resurrection, the supreme place of Christian pilgrimage.

We are joining the millions of pilgrims to Compostela and Jerusalem. We pilgrims are members of the Order of Saint Lazarus, which is deeply linked to the story of Jerusalem and to pilgrimage to the holy places, since the Order worked to make the pilgrims’ way easier and to render humanitarian service to them and to the inhabitants of the holy places.

We wish and pray for the Order’s social and health service to develop more and more in each country where the Order of Saint Lazarus is present, particularly with respect to the Holy Land, and to the projects of the Patriarch, since he is the Order’s Spiritual Protector.

Here I would like to express my profound gratitude to the Order on my own behalf and on behalf of all those helped by the Order’s work, with my affection, prayers and blessing. Thank you also to our hosts, the Grand Priory of Spain and to those who have worked so hard to organise this event,



particularly to Chevalier Cayuela and his team for making it so enjoyable and successful.
Agradable y hermoso!

We thank the Lord for having brought about the unity of the Order in Manchester in 2008 and for our splendid, active Grand Master, Don Carlos, who is always so friendly, approachable and enthusiastic.

As Protector of the Order, I call upon all of you to work for deeper unity within the Order in every one of your countries.

I would like now to add a few spiritual words drawn from our Eastern Liturgy for the three feasts of the Resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost. In the hymn of the Ascension, we read, "Lord, thou hast filled thy disciples with joy, by the promise of the Holy Spirit and thou didst confirm them with thy blessing: and having thus united things of earth and of heaven, thou didst say to thy disciples, I am with you. Await the fulfilment of the Father's promise."

Today, we are celebrating the Feast of Pentecost: once again we are living the descent of the Holy Spirit during this Divine Liturgy. We sing the hymn of the feast, which is the Church's birthday and that of the unity of all Christians in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. As Jesus told his disciples, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit," so he tells us during this Liturgy and pilgrimage, "Receive the Holy Spirit, who will call to mind the teachings of my Gospel."

Dear friends, brothers and sisters, today in this pilgrimage and on this Feast of the Holy Spirit,

be strengthened by the Holy Spirit you received at baptism and who is in you, enabling you to act.

May the Holy Spirit be with you, enabling you to move forward!

May the Holy Spirit be with you, enabling you to be witnesses for Jesus in the world, in your countries, in the Order and through the Order's works and in your own professions!

Be filled with the Holy Spirit, who will be your Counsellor and Guide.

And as, through investiture, you put on your capes, so put on the Holy Spirit of Christ, in order to work for peace and to be in this world of ours, which is God's, salt, light and leaven in the lump of humanity, bringing the world to fruition and creating a civilisation of life and love.

And may the blessing of almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with you all, now and forever.

Amen.

Gregorios III

v.c.